A Publication of

Legislative Services Division

THE INTERIM

JANUARY 2004 HELENA, MONTANA VOL. XIV NO. 8

ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Electric Committee to Meet in the Electric City...The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee will meet Jan. 29 and 30 in Great Falls. (The committee will not meet on Jan. 22 as indicated in its work plan.) The meeting will be held at the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association Office, located at 501 Bay Drive.

Notable agenda topics include the following:

- **NorthWestern Corporation bankruptcy**. The committee will be updated on the status of the NorthWestern bankruptcy case. A significant amount of time has been allocated for discussion and questions.

- **Transmission of electricity**. A diverse group of experts will describe efforts that have been initiated and discuss key actions that are necessary to improve the transmission system to better serve Montana.

- **Default supply of electricity**. Experts will discuss and debate the merits of clearly authorizing the default supplier of electricity to own generation assets and to include those assets in the rate base and earn a rate of return on the default supply of electricity.

Basic information on using performance-based ratemaking procedures to provide an incentive for better electricity supply service will also be provided.

Committee Seeks Comment on Universal System Benefits (USB)...The committee is seeking ideas and comments on options to revise the USB programs for natural gas and electricity. Universal system benefits charges are collected from electricity and gas customers and used to pay for low-income bill assistance and weatherization as well as renewable energy and energy conservation projects. A draft *Universal System Benefits Program Workbook* may be reviewed on the committee's

website or obtained from committee staff. (See "Want to Participate?" for details.) The deadline for comments is Feb. 23, 2004.

Want to Participate?...A meeting schedule, agendas, meeting materials, and other information may be viewed on the committee's website. To get to the website, type "http://leg.mt.gov," click on "Committees," then click on "Interim." Contact Mary Vandenbosch at (406) 444-5367 or mvandenbosch@mt.gov or Rebecca Sattler at (406) 444-0502 or rsattler@mt.gov for more information or to be added to the committee's mailing list.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Ides of January Plus 1...The Legislative Council will meet Friday, Jan. 16 at 9 a.m. in Room 102 of the state Capitol. Legislative staff will report on state revenue collections and expenditures; interactive video networks; activities of the SJR 32 Subcommittee on Medical Liability Insurance; recent court challenges to state statutes; the 2003 video minutes pilot project; and Legislators Back to School Week.

The council will discuss the next steps related to action items identified during its September planning session; select dates for the 2004 party caucuses, new legislator orientation, and the continuing education program; and review proposed changes to the council's rules of procedure on bill drafting and to the procedures for interim committee review of agency legislation.

For more information about the Legislative Council, call Lois Menzies at (406) 444-3066 or send an e-mail to lomenzies@mt.gov.

SJR 32 SUBCOMMITTEE ON MEDICAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

Medical Liability Underwriting Focus of Next Meeting...The SJR 32 Subcommittee, created by the Legislative Council and commissioned to study medical liability insurance issues, will meet on Thursday, Jan. 15. A portion of the meeting will be held in Room 137 of the Capitol, but a portion may also be conducted at an out-of-Capitol site to accommodate a possible video conference with meeting witnesses and participants. Please check the subcommittee's website periodically to track the times and locations of the various segments of the subcommittee's January meeting.

At the meeting, the subcommittee will turn its attention to gaining a better understanding of medical liability underwriting practices, including the actuarial underpinnings of underwriting for medical liability. A seminar on medical liability underwriting conducted by insurance/actuarial experts will likely be the centerpiece of the meeting. Staff is working with representatives of Montana's two major medical liability underwriters -- The Doctors' Company and Utah Medical Insurance Association

-- to ensure a productive interchange between the subcommittee and knowledgeable officials within the industry. The seminar will include a discussion of the factors that affect or are influenced by underwriting decisions or that influence or are affected by actuarial assumptions.

The subcommittee will also conduct a work session to begin to make findings, draw conclusions, and identify options for further research, analysis, and consideration.

The agenda will also provide time for stakeholders and interested persons to address issues relevant to the SJR 32 study.

Information Available on Website...More details of the subcommittee's meetings, past and future, are and will be posted to the subcommittee's website as they become available. For further information, please check the subcommittee's website or contact Dave Bohyer of the Legislative Services Division by phone at (406) 444-3064 or by e-mail at dbohyer@mt.gov.

STATE ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Joint Meeting with Economic Affairs Committee...The State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, Jan. 23 at the state Capitol in Helena. In the morning, the committee will meet jointly with the Economic Affairs Interim Committee in Room 102. The principal purpose of the joint meeting is to be briefed on and discuss the implications of administrative rules proposed by the federal Office of the Comptroller of the Currency aimed at sidestepping or preempting certain state laws that regulate banks and their affiliates. The National Conference of State Legislatures has identified the OCC's proposed rules as an issue that (1) infringes on states' rights, and (2) could substantially change the traditional dual banking system (state charter/federal charter) long recognized in the U.S. (See p. 12 for additional coverage of joint meeting.)

Monitoring Activities...The remainder of the committee meeting will be devoted to issues identified by or associated with veterans' groups or the Montana Department of Military Affairs; and updates on administrative issues emerging within the purview of, respectively, the Department of Administration, the Office of the Secretary of State, the Office of the Commissioner of Political Practices, and the Board of Veterans' Affairs. The committee will also continue to monitor the state's self-insurance program, the actuarial health of the state's major retirement systems, and the implementation of the federal Help America Vote Act.

Additional details of the January meeting will be posted to the committee's website as soon as they are available. For more information, contact Dave Bohyer by phone at (406) 444-3064 or by e-mail at dbohyer@mt.gov.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

December Meeting...The Legislative Finance Committee met on Dec. 5. The committee heard reports from staff and others on various fiscal issues, the highlights of which follow. Staff reports are available on the LFD website at http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal/lfc.asp along with other committee information. For further information, contact Clayton Schenck at cschenck@mt.gov or at (406) 444-2986.

2005 Biennium Budget Spending "Pressure Points"...Staff reported that a supplemental appropriation that may amount to $8.8 million for K-12 education is anticipated in fiscal year 2004. The increase in costs is due to higher than expected student enrollment and guaranteed tax base costs and lower than expected interest and income revenues. Staff also told the committee that both Montana State Hospital and corrections populations are higher than anticipated; however, it is too early in the biennium to determine whether supplemental appropriations will be warranted. For further information, contact Taryn Purdy at tpurdy@mt.gov or at (406) 444-2986.

Wildfire Costs...Since the last Interim article, a number of developments have occurred in the area of fire suppression. Over the next several months, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the U.S. Forest Service will be examining fire bills in detail to finalize the total cost and percentage of responsibility on Montana fires. Updates include:

- *Total Cost* - As of Nov. 14, 2003, the total fiscal year 2004 fire costs were estimated to be $69.3 million. Of that amount, $2.6 million was incurred for sending crews and equipment to assist other state and federal entities. These costs are reimbursable.

- *FEMA* - Some of the fires are Federal Emergency Management Agency eligible. In addition to reimbursable costs, FEMA will pay a portion of fire costs. Estimates indicate that about $38.0 million of the total fire cost is FEMA eligible. As of Nov. 13, 2003, work orders totaling $8 million have been submitted to FEMA. Thus, of the estimated $38 million of FEMA reimbursement, the work orders show that $8 million has been spent on FEMA eligible fire costs and serve as documentation for reimbursement. To pay for these expenses, DNRC has borrowed $8 million from the general fund. According to loan documents provided by DNRC, the $8 million general fund loan will be repaid by Dec. 31, 2003, as FEMA reimbursements are received. In an effort to manage cash flow, DNRC may seek additional general fund loans in anticipation of receiving additional FEMA reimbursements.

- *Forest Service Bill* - Acting as a clearinghouse for fire suppression costs, the Forest Service consolidates, reconciles, and audits the final bill that is sent to

Montana for costs incurred by other entities for which the state must provide reimbursement. Although DNRC estimates the bill to be around $31 million, the Forest Service bill is usually not received until sometime in January. After DNRC receives its bill, it will verify that all costs are correct and accurate. These costs are included in the total fire cost of $69.3 million.

- *California Fires* - DNRC sent a small crew and three engines to assist with the recent California wildfires. However, due to a disagreement between the California Department of Forestry and the Forest Service, the equipment and crew were not utilized, which resulted in a minimal amount of cost. At the time of this writing, the cost is unknown but will be insignificant. California will be billed and Montana will be reimbursed for costs incurred.

Although DNRC has not experienced any financial difficulties as a result of paying fire costs, it is important to note that without federal assistance in fiscal year 2004, paying ongoing fire costs would be difficult at best. Arguably, the magnitude of fire suppression costs over the last several years is straining state resources. For further information, contact Gary Hamel at gahamel@mt.gov or at (406) 444-5347.

General Fund/Federal Funds Update...Staff reported that the general fund ending fund balance for the 2005 biennium is projected to be $37.2 million, or $9 million less than the amount estimated at the end of the 58th legislative session. This balance incorporates actual revenue and disbursement data for fiscal year 2003 and includes revenue and disbursement estimates for the 2005 biennium as budgeted by the 58th Legislature. Also included in this balance are revenue estimate adjustments (-$47.0 million) and expenditure adjustments (-$5.6 million) that are discussed in the report that is available on the committee's website.

It should be emphasized that the projected ending fund balance includes $98.9 million (federal relief funds and the higher than expected fiscal year 2003 ending fund balance) of additional funds that were not anticipated by the 58th Legislature. In other words, without these additional funds, the projected general fund balance at the end of the 2005 biennium would be a negative $62 million.

Section 17-7-140, MCA, requires that the governor "ensure that the expenditure of appropriations does not exceed available revenue." If revenue projections worsen or if 2004 wildfire suppression costs or supplemental appropriations are greater than expected, the governor may be required to implement expenditure reductions as outlined under 17-7-140, MCA. This section of law states in part that a "'projected general fund budget deficit' means an amount, certified by the budget director to the governor, by which the projected ending general fund balance for the biennium is less than 2% of the general fund appropriations for the second fiscal year of the biennium". Two percent of the general fund appropriations for the second year of the biennium would be approximately $26 million.

The staff also presented a brief summary of the general fund outlook for the 2007 biennium. Based on limited information available, revenue growth between the 2005 and 2007 biennium would have to be approximately $235 million to maintain

services at the level authorized by the 58th Legislature. It was emphasized that the $235 million calculation was not a projection of a general fund deficit because staff did not attempt to do detailed revenue projections for the next four years. In other words, whatever revenue growth occurs in the future will supplant some or all of the $235 million revenue need. For further information, contact Terry Johnson at tjohnson@mt.gov or at (406) 444-2986.

Federal Jobs and Growth Relief Reconciliation Act Funds...Staff reported on the governor's allocation of just over $11 million of the $50 million federal funds provided to the state by the federal government, including:

- $1.20 million for costs related to the Northwestern Corporation bankruptcy;
- $4.01 million for various human services programs;
- $2.70 million each for K-12 and higher education; and
- $0.45 million to repair the Capitol steps.

When added to the $27.1 million in fire costs already expended, the Governor has allocated all but $11.8 million of the total $50 million, which will be reserved for the next fire season. For further information, contact Taryn Purdy at tpurdy@mt.gov or at (406) 444-2986.

Capital Project Fund Potential Shortfall/Impacts...The Legislature appropriates revenue derived from the capitol land grant trust lands to fund building and maintenance projects in the Capitol complex. In fiscal year 2003, revenue was less than anticipated causing a $74,436 negative ending fund balance. Additionally, anticipated expenditures in the 2005 biennium exceed anticipated revenue. As a result, there is not enough money to fund all the projects and the executive branch is considering the postponement of certain projects that the Legislature expected to be completed in the 2005 biennium.

Anticipated revenues to the capital project fund are expected to be $1.7 million less than current biennium appropriations. Revenues consist of: 1) the sale of timber; 2) grazing, agricultural, and other rentals; 3) mineral royalties; and 4) oil and gas leases, bonuses and penalties. In the 2005, biennium total revenues from the trust lands are projected at approximately $2.0 million. Diversions in the form of timber sale preparations, trust land administration, and resource development are expected to amount to $363,020 during the biennium, leaving $1.7 million for capital project fund appropriations. However, appropriations in the 2005 biennium are $3.3 million. If all projects are funded in the 2005 biennium, the fund would end fiscal year 2005 with a $1.7 million negative ending fund balance (calculation includes an adjustment for the $74,436 negative ending fund balance in fiscal year 2003).

Given current revenue projections, the executive must consider postponing all Capitol building projects appropriated in the fund. The statutorily appropriated debt-service obligation of the fund will be paid. However, the only other appropriation that could be funded with the capital project fund is $863,092 of the $1.0 million appropriation for general maintenance at the Capitol complex.

As the LFD analyzed this fund, a number of legislative considerations and legal questions came to light. The LSD staff has been contacted to provide legal opinions to the questions. The considerations and questions can be viewed in the report titled Capital Project Fund Potential Shortfall/Impacts, available on the LFD web page or through the LFD office. After the legal opinions are received, the LFD will provide a follow-up report to the Finance Committee. For more information about the capital project fund shortfall, contact Roger Lloyd at rlloyd@mt.gov or Cathy Duncan at cduncan@mt.gov or either at (406) 444-2986.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

Water Policy ...The Environmental Quality Council will meet in Helena on Jan. 13, 14, and 15. The EQC subcommittees will meet on Tuesday, Jan. 13, and the EQC will meet on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 14 and 15 in Room 102 of the state Capitol in Helena. The unusual 3 day meeting is the result of the EQC's efforts to review and evaluate a wide variety of significant water policy issues this interim, guided in part by the legislative requests associated with the House Joint Resolution No. 4 study .

The EQC will address the storage, supply, and distribution of water in Montana and how these activities are affected by federal policies. Other topics will include federal reserved water rights, the total maximum daily load (TMDL) program, the development of coal bed methane in Montana, and the adjudication of water rights in Montana. A panel of experts will discuss the accuracy of the water adjudication process, and the Council will hear a presentation on enforcement of water court decrees.

The Department of Public Health and Human Services will discuss a federally funded multi-agency project created to review the relationship between certain environmental conditions and human health. A panel will review how metal mines are bonded.

If you have questions or need additional information regarding TMDLs or the HJR 4 study, please contact Krista Lee Evans at (406) 444-3957 or kevans@mt.gov.

EQC Agency Oversight Subcommittee...The Agency Oversight Subcommittee will meet Jan. 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Room 102 of the state Capitol. Agenda items include presentations and discussion on the development of an updated statewide elk management plan and a sage grouse management plan; multi-agency efforts to address forest fire prevention in residential interface areas; Missoula County's federally designated non-attainment status for air quality; state agency guidance or standards development for the cleanup of clandestine methamphetamine labs; an update on litigation related to the Montana Environmental Policy Act; and a review of some of the EQC's statutory duties.

For further information on subcommittee activities, contact Larry Mitchell at (406) 444-1352 or lamitchell@mt.gov.

EQC Energy Policy Subcommittee...The EQC Energy Policy Subcommittee will meet Jan. 13 from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in Room 137 of the state Capitol. A panel of state and national experts will discuss hydrogen fuels, ethanol, and distributed wind energy. The presentation will also include information on alternative energy development as well as information on the status of national and state policies regarding alternative energy sources.

For further information on subcommittee activities, contact Todd Everts at (406) 444-3747 or teverts@mt.gov.

Contact the EQC...Minutes of past meetings, draft meeting agendas, and additional information about the Environmental Quality Council are available on the EQC website at http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/lepo, by calling (406) 444-3742, or by e-mailing mtheisen@mt.gov.

STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Committee Holds Third Meeting...The State-Tribal Relations Committee met on Dec. 5. The committee heard presentations from various state programs and discussed issues raised at its September visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation.

Helping Students With Their Careers...Nancy Elliott, Department of Labor and Industry, reported on the "Jobs for Montana Graduates" program. JMG is a school-to-work program that assists Montana high school students to stay in school, graduate, and successfully move from school to work. The program has been established at 41 public schools, the Yellowstone Youth Academy, and the Youth Challenge program. Of the 41 public schools, 11 are on Indian reservations and three are off-reservation but serve reservation students.

JMG works with students in grades 9 through 12 and with dropouts ages 16 to 18. Because research shows that students at risk of dropping out require intervention before high school, a pilot program has been set up at the Harlem middle school.

The program is open to any student, regardless of family income, who is undecided on a career, who is likely to be unemployed after graduation, or who faces significant barriers to completing school.

The committee requested Elliott to provide a progress report later in the interim on the middle school pilot program and with statistics on the number of students who have participated in the JMG program, information on the specific barriers to school success that JMG has identified, and with details of the program's budget.

Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Discusses Funding for Tribal Programs...Larry Peterman, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, discussed state and federal funding that is available to tribes for their fish and wildlife programs. He summarized the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson programs. These are federal programs with strict requirements for administration and allocation of funds. Money is available through

a grant process and there are severe consequences for the misuse of funds. One of the requirements that impedes tribal grants is that projects funded from federal sources must allow for public access.

The department has set aside funds from the State Wildlife Grants Program to fund tribal projects. Two such projects are currently in place with the Blackfeet Tribe (bear-proof garbage dumpsters) and the Fort Belknap Tribes (fish and wildlife management plan). The department is also negotiating a project with the Crow Tribe to survey sage grouse and prairie dog populations. All of these projects require a local match; in-kind services may be used for the local match. Tribes also have access to direct federal funding for fish and wildlife projects, such as the tribal landowner grant program.

Peterman told the committee that the department wants to work cooperatively with tribes on fish and wildlife management and enforcement projects. He said that the department is working on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Crow Tribe.

The committee asked if any grant applications submitted by tribes had been denied. Peterman said that a few had been turned down because the funding source sought was inappropriate or the tribe was unable to provide the required match.

The committee asked Peterman to provide information on the amount of Pittman-Roberston and Dingell-Johnson funds the department has received over the last three years and how much of that amount has gone to tribal projects.

Office of Indian Affairs Reports...Lori Ryan, Office of Indian Affairs, reported on the Government-to-Government Summit held on Oct. 10 and on the recent activities of the Indian Economic Development Commission.

Every tribe participated in the summit, and a number of actions have resulted. Dave Gibson, Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, has spoken with every tribal chairman about negotiating MOUs with the state to help tribes strengthen economic development opportunities on their reservations. The Fort Peck Tribes are working on their MOU, and both the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Blackfeet Tribe have expressed an interest in negotiating MOUs as well. The Tribal Redesign Task Force, part of the larger Medicaid Redesign Task Force, will meet in Billings in mid-December to begin formulating recommendations. The Department of Justice is working on a training program for state employees in compliance with House Bill No. 608. The training will probably take place during the 2004 Conference on Race in Helena next summer. Ryan said that the governor has held follow-up meetings with individual tribes since the summit.

The Indian Economic Development Commission met Oct. 27 and on Dec. 2. There was a proposal at the October meeting to set up an economic development grant program for tribes using the money appropriated to the commission. However, the commission has decided not to pursue that program. Instead, each tribe was asked to identify its economic development priorities to be used by the commission in focusing its efforts. The commission is also working with Dorsey Whitney to look at ways of creating job opportunities on the reservations and is developing a clearinghouse of economic development funding sources for tribes. The commission will meet again on

Jan. 14. Commission Chairman Noel Sansaver would like to come to a future meeting of the committee and report on commission activities.

In response to a question about the Little Shell Tribe, Ryan said that the commission is helping the Little Shell Tribe formulate an economic development plan and then identify possible funding sources. Because it is not yet federally recognized, the Little Shell Tribe is not eligible for many federal programs.

The committee asked if the tribes and the Office of Economic Opportunity could identify barriers to economic development on reservations that could be removed through legislation. Ryan replied in the affirmative and went on to say that the community development block grant program is one area the committee could look at.

The committee voted to send a letter to the those tribal governments that have not yet indicated an interest in an economic development MOU, encouraging them to do so.

Committee Discusses Fort Belknap Issues...The committee discussed the issues raised at its September visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation. Staff presented their research to date on these issues and will continue to work on the other issues for the March meeting. The committee asked staff to send a progress report to Fort Belknap so that the Community Council knows that the committee is working on their issues. It was suggested that a letter also be sent to other tribal governments who may have an interest in these same issues.

Staff Updates Committee on HJR 8...Staff gave a progress report on the HJR 8 study of American Indian dropouts in Montana public schools. With the committee's concurrence, staff will focus the study on identifying promising intervention strategies and dropout prevention programs that school districts can implement to help keep students in school.

Committee Hears from Tribal Council Member...Bill Whitehead, recently elected to the Fort Peck Tribal Council, spoke to the committee on a couple of issues. Fort Peck Community College recently opened a new campus in Wolf Point and is also offering classes in Glasgow. As a result, the college is attracting many non-Indians to its programs. State funding for nonbeneficiary students would help Fort Peck Community College and other tribal colleges to continue this work. Whitehead also expressed support for a resolution passed by the 2003 legislature urging the federal government to provide funding directly to tribes instead of through the states.

Will Meet in March...The next committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 5. Agenda items may include:

- presentation by the Board of Pardons and Parole on the report required by HB 211;
- report on a project of the Indian Law Clinic at the UM Law School helping American Indian inmates prepare for parole hearings;
- report from the Office of Economic Opportunity on the state-tribal MOUs;

- report from the Department of Labor and Industry on the use of tribal labor statistics in state employment reports;
- an update on Indian education;
- an update on the middle school JMG pilot program in Harlem; and
- a report on HJR 43 (study surface water and ground water impacts of the abandoned Zortman and Landusky mine sites on the Milk and Missouri watersheds and the effectiveness of state reclamation efforts at mine sites in protecting watersheds).

Information Always Available...Information on the State-Tribal Relations Committee is available on the committee's website (http://www.leg.mt.gov and follow the "Committees" link). Or you can contact Connie Erickson at (406) 444-3078 or by e-mail at cerickson@mt.gov.

K-12 EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Subcommittee To Meet in January...The K-12 Education Subcommittee of the Education and Local Government Committee will meet on Friday, Jan. 9 at 1 p.m. in Room 102 of the Capitol. There will be a roundtable discussion on a statewide health insurance pool for school district employees. Participating in the roundtable will be representatives from the Governor's Office, various education organizations, school districts, county superintendents, and school district health plan administrators. The agenda is posted on the subcommittee's website (www.leg.mt.gov and follow the "Committee" links). For further information, contact Connie Erickson at (406)444-3078 or by e-mail at cerickson@mt.gov.

CHILDREN, FAMILIES, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Two-day Meeting in January...The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee will meet on Jan. 22 and 23 in Helena. On Thursday morning, the committee will conduct its agency monitoring of the Department of Public Health and Human Services. Department director Gail Gray will provide a general overview of department activities. Bonnie Adee, Mental Health Ombudsman, will report on mental health issues. Other reports will include the SB 347 directive on Service Area Authorities, and the cost study on children with multiagency needs. The Legislative Audit Division and Legislative Fiscal Division will report on issues related to the department, and the American Massage Therapy Association-MT Chapter will discuss potential licensure.

Thursday afternoon, the committee will concentrate on the Senate Joint Resolution No. 11 study on alcohol and drug policy and on coordinated statewide leadership in the continuum of prevention, early intervention, treatment, and criminal

justice. The committee will review models in the areas of prevention, treatment, and drug control and invites testimony from stakeholders. The initial proposals being prepared for the committee will be available by Jan. 12 on the committee's website.

HJR 3 Study...On Jan. 23, the committee will concentrate on the House Joint Resolution No. 3 study of public defense for indigent parents in child abuse and neglect proceedings. The committee will evaluate data on the number of hearings and petitions in the system; review the current status across the state of treatment courts and parent education programs; and solicit views from the public defenders and prosecution. The committee is planning on coordinating its efforts with the Law and Justice Interim Committee's study on indigent defense.

An agenda and all materials will be posted to the committee's website by Jan. 12. Meetings are scheduled for March 26 and May 6 and 7. If you need more information or wish to be placed on the interested persons list, contact Susan Byorth Fox at (406) 444-3597 or sfox@mt.gov.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Banking, Insurance, and Securities Regulation Scheduled for Joint Meeting...A joint meeting of the Economic Affairs Committee and the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee on Jan. 23 will feature discussions by federal officials, the Conference of State Bank Supervisors and the federal Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. They will join federal and state regulators to talk about banking, insurance, securities regulation, and related legislation at the federal and state levels. The meeting starts at 8 a.m. in Room 102 of the state Capitol.

Neil Milner, executive director of the Conference of State Bank Supervisors, and Gregory Golembe, senior adviser for banking relations at the OCC, will discuss the OCC's proposed rule to preempt state laws as they apply to national banks. Representatives of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., the Federal Reserve Bank, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Securities and Exchange Commission are also scheduled to address the committees.

Annie Goodwin, Montana Commissioner of Banking and Financial Institutions, will discuss state regulation of financial institutions, including banks and payday lenders. Christina Goe, acting chief legal counsel at the state auditor's office, will provide an overview of Montana's insurance and securities regulation and describe the interconnection with federal regulation. Public comment will round out the morning session.

Committee Goes Solo in the Afternoon...State Auditor John Morrison will provide an overview of the activities of his office. The committee will review rules proposed by the state Board of Medical Examiners on the implementation of HB 321 regarding medical assistants.

An update on workers' compensation issues related to SJR 17, which set a goal of simplifying workers' compensation statutes, will follow. In addition to presentations about who has been statutorily excluded from coverage of workers' compensation, the committee will hear from claimants who have suggestions on how to simplify the statutes; the suggestions will be based on the claimants' experiences.

Staff will provide a brief presentation on venture capital and a proposed work plan to involve stakeholders in developing issues for future committee discussion.

Information on the Web...For more information about the meeting and background materials as they become available, contact Pat Murdo at (406) 444-3594 or check the committee's website at http://leg.mt.gov -- just follow the "Committees" links. The public is welcome to attend.

REVENUE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Committee Meets for Two Days...The Revenue and Transportation Committee met on Dec. 11 and 12. The committee discussed the valuation of electrical generation property and heard a variety of reports from the Department of Revenue and the Department of Transportation. The committee also considered reports on national and state economic trends.

Committee Reviews Trends in Market Valuation of Generation Facilities...As part of the Senate Joint Resolution No. 29 study of the taxation of electrical generation property, committee staff presented a report (the report is available on the committee's website) that compared recent trends of the market valuation of property class thirteen coal-fired electrical generation facilities and hydroelectric facilities owned by PPL Montana with the valuation trends of electrical generation facilities owned by regulated utilities in the state. The report also discussed some aspects of PPL Montana's property tax protest and some issues related to the valuation of electrical generation facilities for property tax purposes.

Class thirteen property includes electrical generation facilities of centrally assessed electric power companies (e.g., Puget Sound Energy, Avista, and the Montana-Dakota Utilities); electrical generation facilities of exempt wholesale generators (i.e., PPL Montana) under the Public Utility Holding Act of 1935; and noncentrally assessed generators. Class thirteen property does not include qualifying facilities, as defined in 16 U.S.C. 796, that are taxed under property class four (land and improvements) and class eight (business equipment). Class thirteen electric generation facilities are centrally assessed by the Montana Department of Revenue. (A stand alone electrical generation facility would be locally assessed.)This approach uses companywide information regardless of location of assets or customer base to determine the market value of the business entity and allocates a proportionate share of the total value to the state which is further apportioned to political subdivisions within the state.

PPL Montana acquired most of the Montana Power Company's generation assets in late 1999 and was first assessed property taxes for the electrical generation facilities in tax year 2000. In that year, the purchase price served as the basis for determining the market value of the facilities. The market value of its ownership interest in Colstrip Units I and II increased by about $66 million. PPL Montana and Puget Sound Energy each have a 50% ownership interest in Units I and II. In tax year 1999 the apportioned value of MPC's interest in Units I and II was about 4.5% below Puget Sound's apportioned value. Since then PPL Montana's apportioned value has ranged from 50% to 60% higher than Puget Sound. The 2000 market value of most the hydroelectric facilities purchased by PPL Montana were substantially higher than the 1999 values.

PPL Montana has disputed the valuation of its generation facilities for a variety of reasons and has been paying a portion of its property taxes under protest. Two significant elements of the protest relate to valuing the properties as centrally assessed property and to the equalization of value with similarly situated taxpayers. In particular, PPL Montana argues that the Colstrip Units I and II are valued substantially higher than Puget Sound's interest. In tax year 2002, PPL Montana similarly argued that its hydroelectric facilities were valued higher than Avista's dam in Noxon. PPL Montana also contends that its generation facilities should be locally assessed. The state Tax Appeal Board will consider the tax protest next April.

Intangible Property Tax Exemption...In 1999, the Legislature exempted intangible personal property from taxation, effective for tax years beginning after 1999 (Ch. 583, L. 1999). The exemption was enacted because of a legislative audit that found intangible property of locally assessed property, which includes franchises such as McDonald's, was not included in the valuation of the property but was included in the valuation of centrally assessed property (e.g., utilities, airlines, and railroads). The exemption of intangible personal property of centrally assessed property was phased in over a 3-year period. The legislation also requires the Department of Revenue to report on intangible property to the committee. Gene Walborn, Department of Revenue, summarized the provisions of the legislation, the method used to determine the value of centrally assessed intangible personal property, and the amount of forgone taxes associated with the exemption. According to DOR estimates, the amount of lost revenue to state and local governments in tax year 2003 is about $17.1 million. The exemption for intangible property is not a "tax expenditure" because it applies to all taxpayers.

Smoking Gun for Phase-out of Business Equipment Property Tax Still in the Holster...Dan Dodds, DOR, told the committee that the inflation-adjusted growth rate in wages and salaries in 2002 was 2.48 percent, which is below the 2.85 percent "trigger" growth rate for the phase-out of the property tax on class eight business equipment (15-6-138, MCA). Had the trigger growth rate been met, the tax rate on business equipment would have fallen from 3 percent to 2 percent in tax year 2005, and the property tax on business equipment would have been eliminated in tax year 2008. The department will next calculate the growth rate in wages and salaries by Oct. 31, 2004.

Lee Heiman, committee staff attorney, reviewed a legal opinion he prepared for the Legislative Fiscal Division on the calculation of the trigger in light of federal revisions in the wages and salaries data series. The opinion also included a recommendation for a technical amendment to 15-6-138, MCA, regarding the issuance of the data series and the timing of the calculation.

Litigation Reports...Dave Ohler, chief legal counsel, Department of Revenue, reported on the litigation activities of DOR. He said that taxpayer disputes over property taxes, corporation license taxes, individual income taxes, and liquor taxes account for most of the tax protests. Property taxes and corporation license taxes typically have the most potential impact on the state general fund. PPL Montana, EnCana Energy, and Montana-Dakota Utilities have protested property taxes claiming that the valuation of their property is not equalized with the property valuation of similarly situated taxpayers or disputing the valuation of property as centrally assessed property or both. Touch America and Qwest claim that the Department of Revenue has not properly accounted for economic obsolescence in the valuation of their telecommunications property.

Tim Reardon, chief legal counsel, Montana Department of Transportation reported on the litigation activities of MDT. He said that contract claims account for most of the litigation at MDT. He noted that condemnation proceedings are usually resolved without litigation.

Highway Safety...Sixty-two people died on Montana highways during September, October and November. Thirty-seven of those people (60%) had not been wearing a seatbelt; 15 (24%) had been wearing a seatbelt; 5 were pedestrians; and seatbelt use was unknown in 5 of the fatalities. These comprise some of the numbers presented by Dave Galt, director, Montana Department of Transportation, during his regularly-scheduled report to the committee about highway safety and MDT's efforts to reduce motor vehicle accidents and highway fatalities. To give more meaning to the numbers, each person's name and age was also listed as well as the number of fatalities in which alcohol was a factor.

U.S. Highway 2...Also at the forefront of MDT's activities has been U.S. Highway 2 and complying with the provisions of section 60-2-133, MCA, which provides:

(1) The [Transportation] commission shall direct the department to construct a four-lane highway generally along the present route of U.S. highway 2 from the North Dakota border to the Idaho border in order to increase tourism and to bring economic development to Montana. Planning for the U.S. highway 2 project must be included in any future fiscal plan developed by the department.

(2) The department shall seek additional federal funding that does not require a state funding match for the U.S. highway 2 project.

(3) The department may not expend any resources on the U.S. highway 2 project that would jeopardize any future highway projects.

The committee is regularly updated on the progress of the Environmental Impact Statement, scheduled for completion next summer. The EIS will determine what

improvements are needed for the segment of the highway between Havre and Fort Belknap. According to a report prepared for the committee by MDT, the purpose of the U.S. Highway 2 project is "to replace U.S. Highway 2 with an efficient, safe highway that is attractive to the needs of local communities, agriculture, industry, commerce, and tourism."

A citizens advisory committee has been formed to advise the U.S. Highway 2 project team on local and regional issues and to act as a liaison between the project team and the communities along the highway's corridor. It is a diverse group, consisting of county commissioners, mayors, citizen representatives of the towns of Chinook, Havre, and Harlem, the Fort Belknap Indian Community Transportation Planner, president of the US 2 Association, and others. The advisory committee's vision for US 2 is that the corridor should enhance community connections, provide a safe and harmonious travel experience for all users, maintain and promote economic opportunity, stay in context with the surrounding communities and environment, and strengthen community identity.

MDT's report also summarizes the socioeconomic conditions of the US 2 corridor as analyzed in a study conducted by a private consultant as part of the EIS process. The study's executive summary and MDT's report describe the methods for evaluating economic impacts of highway investments and rate the current economic impact of and potential for business expansion in six economic sectors: tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, energy, retail and services, and the public sector. In each of those sectors, according to the both documents, the potential for economic growth as a result of major capacity improvements to US 2 is low.

Finally, the total project costs (including but not limited to construction items, engineering, insurance, mobilization and contingencies, and right-of-way acquisition) of the various project alternatives for Havre to Fort Belknap (approximately 55 miles) is estimated in MDT's report as follows:

Improved 2-Lane:	$69.7 million
Improved 2-Lane with Passing Lanes:	$73.5 million
4-Lane Undivided:	$94.5 million
4-Lane Divided:	$106.8 million

The challenge for MDT will lie in obtaining enough federal money to construct a 4-lane highway that does not require any state match or jeopardize other projects, as required in section 60-2-133, MCA.

Full Head of Steam or Slow and Steady...As part of its revenue estimating responsibilities, the committee each year invites economic forecasters to discuss national and state economic trends. Andrew Hodge, Global Insight (a national economic forecasting firm), highlighted current economic trends in the United States. He discussed trends in consumer spending, debt, and sentiment; productivity; business investment corporate profits; capital gains; housing values; the strength of the dollar; and international trade. He said that the economic recession ended in late 2001, but that up until now the nation experienced a growth recession with gains coming primarily from

increased productivity and not from new hires. Although there may still be underlying problems in the economy, Hodge said there should be a strong national economic turnaround.

Paul Polzin, director, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana, compared several Montana economic trends with national trends. Prior to the onset of the economic recession in April 2001, monthly percentage changes in nonfarm wage and salary employment (data presented for the period Jan. 1999 -- Oct 2003) in Montana were similar to national changes. Since April 2001 (and Sept. 11) percentage changes in employment were much stronger in Montana than the nation as a whole. Employment changes began to converge again around April 2003. Similarly, consumer sentiment in Montana has been much stronger than the nation as a whole. Polzin pointed out that Montana was able to dodge the recession "bullet" because the economic sectors that suffered most from the recession (e.g., high tech manufacturing, "dotcoms," communications, financial services, and airlines) are not significant components of the Montana economy. Conversely, he said that the growth in nonfarm wage and salary income in Montana will not be as strong as it was between 1997 and 2001.

Next Meeting Scheduled in February...The committee is scheduled to meet Feb. 13 in Helena. For more information about the committee, its work plan, or agendas, please visit the website (http://www.leg.mt.gov and follow the "Committees" links), or contact Jeff Martin at (406) 444-3595 or jmartin@mt.gov or Leanne Kurtz at (406) 444-3064 or lekurtz@mt.gov.

TIME AND TIDE

Event	Days remaining
Target date for completion of interim committee work (September 15, 2004)	259
General election (November 2, 2004)	307
59th Legislature convenes (January 3, 2005)	369

THE BACK PAGE

THE STORY OF JOEY: WHY AMERICA CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO IGNORE ITS AT-RISK STUDENTS

by Connie Erickson, Research Analyst
Legislative Services Division

MEET JOEY

Joey slouches into math class on Monday morning after a weekend of partying with his friends. Mrs. Kelly passes out the exam as students sharpen their pencils and put their books away. Joey groans; he'd skipped school all last week and didn't hear the announcement of the test for today. Then he sighs; it really doesn't make any difference. No matter how hard he tries, he just doesn't understand the math. He also has a hard time reading the explanations in the textbook. He'd asked Mrs. Kelly for some help, but she just dismissed him saying, "If you'd come to class once in awhile, you wouldn't need my help". When she turns her back to write instructions on the whiteboard, Joey sneaks out.

He thought about going home, but since his dad lost his job (he, too, dropped out of school), he's started drinking more; by now he'd be pretty drunk and pretty belligerent. His mom works two jobs to keep food on the table, but with six kids the money doesn't stretch very far. His older brother John dropped out of high school six years ago when a new factory opened up in town. But the job didn't last and now his brother is in prison for robbing a gas station. His older sister Kathy got pregnant when she was a sophomore and dropped out; she and her four-year old son still live at home. Joey's younger siblings enjoy school now, but Joey can see the signs: Mary can't read very well; Annie was held back a grade; and Tommy is starting to get in trouble at school.

Joey wanders through the neighborhood wondering where to go. He likes to play basketball, but the neighborhood court was vandalized a month ago and the city removed the hoops. There was a youth center near Joey's home where kids could get help with their school work and spend some quality time with counselors and mentors, but it was shut down after its funding was cut. Joey finally stops at a local convenience store where his friends hang out. Most of them have already dropped out of school and are always ragging on Joey to do the same. Today, it out sounds like a good idea.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

In October 2000, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that approximately 11% of young people between 16 and 24 years of age were not enrolled in high school and had not completed high school. Students who drop out of school place a heavy financial burden on this nation in the form of high unemployment rates,

lost productivity, and reduced tax income. At the same time, these students generate larger social costs in the form of greater engagement in high-risk behaviors (substance abuse, sexual activity, crime, etc.), higher rates of incarceration, and greater dependence on government assistance programs.

Current economic, demographic, and educational trends could exacerbate the problem in the future. As the U.S. economy moves towards a higher-skilled labor force, workers without an education will fall farther and farther behind. At the same time, the number of students who are most at risk of dropping out is increasing in our public schools. The growing push for accountability is producing school policies that could increase the number of dropouts.

What can be done to help these students? In order to answer this question, we must first determine why students drop out.

WHY DO STUDENTS DROP OUT OF SCHOOL?

Students who drop out of school are influenced by a variety of factors related to the student, school, family, and community. Many of these factors can also serve as predictors of dropping out.

Student-related factors: These factors are generally personal problems that are independent of the student's social or family background. What are some of the personal problems that students experience that can negatively affect their educational career? Students who abuse drugs or alcohol, students who become pregnant, and students who run afoul of the law are all at risk of dropping out of high school prior to graduation. These factors make school attendance difficult if not impossible. Students whose behavior in school results in suspensions or other disciplinary actions are highly unlikely to return even if given the opportunity. Students who are habitually truant, absent, or tardy will probably simply stop coming.

One student-related factor that is not necessarily a personal problem but can influence a student's decision to stay in school is employment. Favorable opportunities for employment in the community increases the likelihood that a student will leave school. In fact, there is a direct correlation between the number of hours worked and the likelihood of dropping out.[1]

School-related factors: The single strongest school-related predictor of dropping out is poor academic performance. Students who drop out will frequently cite an inability to keep up because of low achievement and lack of basic skills as the reason for leaving

[1]E. Gregory Woods, "Reducing the Dropout Rate", School Improvement Research Series Close-Up #17 (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: Portland, Ore.) April 2002, p. 3.

school.[2] Grade retention is also a significant factor. Students who repeat one grade are twice as likely to drop out.[3] This likelihood increases to four times for students who repeat more than one grade.[4]

Schools themselves can contribute to high dropout rates by the kind of educational environment they create. If schools offer poorly organized academic programs, suffer morale problems among students and staff, tolerate ineffective teachers, or have low expectations for their students, their dropout rate will be higher than schools that create a positive, student-supported environment.

Schools can also impact their dropout rates by the types of policies and practices they adopt. As a result of the growing emphasis on accountability in public schools, many schools are implementing new policies, such as high school exit exams, while eliminating old practices, such as "social" promotion. Students on the edge of dropping out because of poor academic performance may choose to withdraw rather than face the humiliation of failing an exit exam or of falling farther and farther behind. As schools tighten up their disciplinary and attendance practices and implement "zero tolerance" policies, many students will be discharged from school.

Family-related factors: There are a number of factors related to family situations that can negatively impact a student's ability to stay in school. Students most likely to leave school without a diploma live in single-parent households, live in low-income households, or have parents or siblings who also dropped out of school.[5] Students who have a stressful or unstable home life due to parental separation or divorce, financial difficulties, substance abuse, or domestic violence are also at a higher risk of dropping out. Conversely, students whose parents monitor and regulate their activities, provide emotional support, encourage independent decision-making, and are more interested in their schooling are less likely to withdraw before completing high school.[6]

[2]Joseph D. Creech, "Reducing Dropout Rates", Educational Benchmarks 2000 Series (Southern Regional Education Board: Atlanta, GA), p. 15.

[3]Woods, p. 3.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Creech, p. 14.

[6]Russell W. Rumberger, "Why Students Drop Out of School and What Can Be Done", paper prepared for conference "Dropouts in America: How Severe is the Problem? What Do We Know about Intervention and Prevention?", Harvard University, January 2001 (University of California - Santa Barbara) revised May 2001, p. 13.

Another family-related factor that impacts the dropout rate is ethnic or racial background. Students who are members of a minority or for whom English is a second language are at greater risk of dropping out than students whose families are white or native-born.

Community-related factors: The community in which a student lives also has an impact on that student's decision to remain in or drop out of school. Poverty is one of the strongest predictors of dropping out. Poor communities may have fewer resources, such as playgrounds and after-school programs, to support at-risk students. Poor communities tend to have poor schools. Other community-related factors include negative peer influences and greater employment opportunities.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

With the adoption of "No Child Left Behind" and its premise that every child from every background in every part of America must be given every opportunity to succeed in school, a new light is shining on those students who continue to fail and to drop out of school. If America truly wants to see that no child is left behind, attention must be given to those students who, for any of the reasons listed above, leave our high schools every year in ever-growing numbers.

How, then, do we keep these students in school? We keep them in school by designing intervention strategies that focus on why they drop out in the first place. First of all, because dropping out is influenced by both individual and institutional factors, intervention strategies can focus on individual values, attitudes, and behaviors associated with dropping out or on the environment within families, schools, and communities.[7] Dropout prevention programs that focus on the individual use programmatic strategies to provide at-risk students with additional resources and support to help keep them in school. The two most common programmatic strategies are supplemental programs that provide services within an existing school program and alternative school programs either within an existing school (a "school within a school") or in a separate facility (an alternative school). Intervention strategies that focus on institutional factors use systemic strategies that provide resources to strengthen or restructure families, schools, and communities. These systemic strategies have the potential to impact a much larger number of students by improving the environments that contribute to dropout behavior. However, systemic changes are extremely difficult to achieve because they involve making fundamental changes in the way institutions operate.[8]

[7]Rumberger, p. 21.

[8]Rumberger, p. 28.

Secondly, effective prevention strategies must address both the academic and the social problems that students experience.[9] At-risk students must be supported in all areas of their lives. Services must be flexible and tailor-made for individual student needs.

Thirdly, because dropout attitudes and behaviors began as early as elementary school, dropout prevention strategies should begin early in a child's educational career.[10] Early intervention is powerful and cost-effective and may be the very best approach to dropout prevention.

FAST FORWARD TEN YEARS - CHOOSE YOUR OWN ENDING

Joey shuffles through the food line with his tin tray. A piece of dry meat loaf and a scoop of instant mashed potatoes are plopped on his plate. But his thoughts are not on food. Tomorrow he meets with the parole board. He is unsure what the outcome will be. Part of him wants to go home, but another part knows that home means no job, no money, and no future. This is his second prison term. Shortly after he dropped out of high school, he and his friends robbed a convenience store. Because he was close to 18 he was tried as an adult. The judge was tired of these young adult males coming before him and decided to sentence this group to prison as a warning to others. After he got out, Joey tried going back to school, but the high school wouldn't take him because of his age. He tried enrolling in a GED program but there was a long waiting list. Besides, his reading skills were so poor he probably couldn't pass the tests. He'd never held a job; with no education and no skills, his chances of landing a job were slim. And so, he started selling drugs but got caught and sent back to prison.

Joey's dad left the family. Last they heard, he was living in a homeless shelter. John is serving a life sentence for a robbery that resulted in a death. Joey's sister Kathy has three children now and her TANF benefits ran out after five years. She still lives at home and works part-time at McDonald's. Her children are beginning to experience problems in school. Mary also got pregnant in high school and dropped out. Annie finished high school, but her academic skills are so poor, she cannot find a job. Tommy left home at age 15 and has not been heard from since.

Three generations in one family lost because at-risk students were left behind. Three generations who will contribute nothing to the well-being of society but will continue to burden already over-burdened public services.

OR

Joey sharpens his pencil and checks to see that his graphing calculator works before beginning his math test. This is the class's final exam, and he is visibly nervous. He is

[9]Rumberger, p. 21.

[10]Rumberger, p. 22.

carrying a "B" average but would like to try for an "A" on this test. This is his final semester at the community college. Next semester, he will begin at State University. Only part-time because he has to work, but he is confident he can succeed.

Joey dropped out of high school during his junior year. He hung around on the street corner for a year unable to find work. He got into trouble when some of his buddies conned him into selling some street drugs. A juvenile probation officer recognized that Joey was not a bad kid, just a kid that needed some help and guidance in his life. The officer was able to get Joey into an alternative high school and also line up some free tutoring from the local community college. It took him a little longer, but Joey got his diploma. The officer also helped him find a part-time job that became full-time once he was through school. After a couple of years, his employer recognized Joey's potential and offered to help him with his tuition at the community college if he wanted to continue his education. Joey jumped at the chance and began attending part-time.

Joey continued living at home so he could help out his mom and younger siblings. The school district where they attended school finally recognized the need to help at-risk students stay in school. The district established a special secondary school for students from low-income families and with a history of low academic achievement. The school is organized very differently from the regular public high school: small classes, longer class periods, concentrated work in specific areas, and career-oriented apprenticeships in addition to college prep courses. Mary will graduate this year. Annie is studying to be a nurse. Tommy will finish community college this year and will go on to State University with Joey. Tommy wants to help at-risk students like himself, so he tutors at the neighborhood middle school.

Joey's dad left the family. Last they heard, he was living in a homeless shelter. Joey tried to help John get into a GED program after his prison release, but his brother's reading skills were so poor he could not complete the classes. Joey's sister Kathy has three children now and her TANF benefits ran out after five years. She still lives at home and works part-time at McDonald' s. Her children are beginning to experience problems in school.

Joey could have very easily followed the path of his older brother. Luckily, Joey found someone who saw something in him worth saving. But for every Joey, there are Johns and Kathys whom the educational system has failed. As a nation, we can no longer afford these failures. At-risk children deserve our attention and our concern. Who knows, it maybe that Joey, who sits in the corner of the classroom and struggles to keep up with his studies, holds the key to curing cancer.

INTERIM CALENDAR

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED,
ALL ROOM DESIGNATIONS ARE IN THE CAPITOL BLDG.

JANUARY

January 1, New Year's Day, holiday

January 8, Law and Justice Committee, cancelled

January 9, Local Government Subcommittee, Room 102, 9 a.m.

January 9, K-12 Education Subcommittee, Room 102, 1 p.m.

January 9, Postsecondary and Education Policy and Budget Subcommittee

January 13, EQC Agency Oversight Subcommittee, Room 102, 8:30 a.m.

January 13, EQC Energy Policy Subcommittee, Room 137, 10 a.m.

January 14, Environmental Quality Council, Room 102, 8 a.m.

January 15, Environmental Quality Council, Room 102, 8 a.m.

January 15, SJR 32 Subcommittee on Medical Liability Insurance, Room 137, 8 a.m.

January 16, Legislative Council, Room 102, 9 a.m.

January 22, Children, Families, Health, and Human Services, Room 152, 8 a.m.

January 23, Children, Families, Health, and Human Services, Room 152, 8 a.m.

January 23, Joint meeting of the Economic Affairs Committee and the State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee, Room 102, 8 a.m.

January 23, Economic Affairs Committee, Room 102, 1:30 p.m.

January 23, State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee, Room 137, 1 p.m.

January 29, Energy and Telecommunications Committee, Great Falls

January 30, Energy and Telecommunications Committee, Great Falls